

## COUNTRY DATA: Belgium : Information from the CIA World Factbook

### INTRODUCTION

Belgium became independent from the Netherlands in 1830; it was occupied by Germany during World Wars I and II. The country prospered in the past half century as a modern, technologically advanced European state and member of NATO and the EU. Tensions between the Dutch-speaking Flemings of the north and the French-speaking Walloons of the south have led in recent years to constitutional amendments granting these regions formal recognition and autonomy.

### GEOGRAPHY

<b>Location</b>	Western Europe, bordering the North Sea, between France and the Netherlands
<b>Area</b>	total: 30,528 sq km country comparison to the world: <u>140</u> land: 30,278 sq km water: 250 sq km
<b>Climate</b>	temperate; mild winters, cool summers; rainy, humid, cloudy
<b>Natural Resources</b>	construction materials, silica sand, carbonates
<b>Total Renewable Water Resources</b>	20.8 cu km (2005)
<b>Freshwater Withdrawal</b>	total: 7.44 cu km/yr (13%/85%/1%) per capita: 714 cu m/yr (1998)
<b>Natural Hazards</b>	flooding is a threat along rivers and in areas of reclaimed coastal land, protected from the sea by concrete dikes
<b>Environmental Issues</b>	the environment is exposed to intense pressures from human activities: urbanization, dense transportation network, industry, extensive animal breeding and crop cultivation; air and water pollution also have repercussions for neighboring countries; uncertainties regarding federal and regional responsibilities (now resolved) had slowed progress in tackling environmental challenges

### PEOPLE

<b>Population</b>	10,431,477 (July 2011 est.) country comparison to the world: <u>80</u>
<b>Ethnic Groups</b>	Fleming 58%, Walloon 31%, mixed or other 11%
<b>Religions</b>	Roman Catholic 75%, other (includes Protestant) 25%

<b>Languages</b>	Dutch (official) 60%, French (official) 40%, German (official) less than 1%, legally bilingual (Dutch and French)
<b>Literacy Rate</b>	definition: age 15 and over can read and write total population: 99% male: 99% female: 99% (2003 est.)
<b>Major Infectious Diseases</b>	N/A
<b>GOVERNMENT</b>	
<b>Type</b>	federal parliamentary democracy under a constitutional monarchy
<b>Independence</b>	4 October 1830 (a provisional government declared independence from the Netherlands); 21 July 1831 (King LEOPOLD I ascended to the throne)
<b>Constitution</b>	7 February 1831; amended many times; revised 14 July 1993 to create a federal state
<b>Legal System</b>	based on civil law system influenced by English constitutional theory; judicial review of legislative acts; accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction with reservations
<b>ECONOMY</b>	
<b>Agricultural Products</b>	sugar beets, fresh vegetables, fruits, grain, tobacco; beef, veal, pork, milk
<b>Industries</b>	engineering and metal products, motor vehicle assembly, transportation equipment, scientific instruments, processed food and beverages, chemicals, basic metals, textiles, glass, petroleum
<b>Import commodities</b>	raw materials, machinery and equipment, chemicals, raw diamonds, pharmaceuticals, foodstuffs, transportation equipment, oil products
<b>Import Partners</b>	Netherlands 17.93%, Germany 17.14%, France 11.69%, Ireland 6.26%, US 5.74%, UK 5.07%, China 4.09% (2009)
<b>Export Commodities</b>	machinery and equipment, chemicals, finished diamonds, metals and metal products, foodstuffs
<b>Export Partners</b>	Germany 19.58%, France 17.71%, Netherlands 11.84%, UK 7.21%, US 5.37%, Italy 4.77% (2009)
<b>Per Capita GDP</b>	\$37,900 (2010 est.) country comparison to the world: <u>25</u> \$37,300 (2009 est.) \$38,400 (2008 est.)  note: data are in 2010 US dollars

Population below poverty line	15.2% (2007 est.)
-------------------------------	-------------------

\*CITATIONS: All information included above is extracted from the CIA World Factbook except where noted.

**COUNTRY: BELGIUM**

**General**

Life Expectancy at Birth (in years)	80.3
Average number of years in School (in years)	10.6
Gross National Income Per Capita (In US Dollars)	34,873

**Gender Inequality**

Female Seats in Parliament (%)	36.2
Population with at least a Secondary Education Female (% Of 25 and older)	75.7
Population with at least a Secondary Education Male (% Of 25 and older)	79.8
Labor Force Participation Female (%)	60.9
Labor Force Participation Male (%)	73.5
Births Attended by Skilled Health Professionals (%)	..

**Poverty**

Population surviving on \$1.25 per day (%)	N/A
--	-----

**Empowerment**

Number of Journalists Imprisoned	0
Corruption Victims (% of people who face a bribe situation in the last year)	6
Political Engagement (% percent of people who voiced opinion to public officials)	23

<b>Sustainability</b>	
Fossil Fuels as Primary Energy Source (%)	73
Renewable Resources as Primary Energy Source (%)	4
Population without Access to Water (%)	0
Population Without Access to Sanitation Services (%)	0
Population affected by natural disasters (% between 2000-2009)	Less than 0.01
<b>Human Security</b>	
Number of Refugees leaving this country	100
Number of Internally Displaced People in This Country	..
Prevalence of Undernourishment (%)	Less than 5
<b>Demographics</b>	
Urban Residents (% of total Population)	97.4
<b>Health</b>	
HIV Prevalence in Female Youth (% ages 15-24)	0.1
HIV Prevalence in Male Youth (% ages 15-24)	0.2
HIV Prevalence in Adults (% ages 15-49)	0.2
<b>Other</b>	
Official Development Assistance Per Capita (in US dollars)	..
Population without Electricity (%)	..

